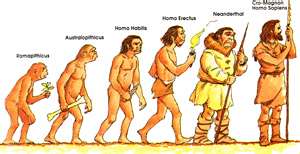
**Tim Callery** **My Story of the world**

Chapter One: Pre-History

There was a period before history called Pre-History. How we know about this period of history you may ask? Well, the answer to that question is that over the years archeologists have found artifacts from that time. They figured out that the artifacts were so old that there was no record of history that was from the time that those artifacts were in use.

[](http://classroomclipart.com/clipart-view/History/Ancient_Civilizations/Prehistory/DSC_9744w_jpg.htm) The oldest artifacts were found in the Great Rift Valley in modern day Tanzania in Africa. With that proof archeologists and scientists believe that human[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Prehistoric+Man&view=detail&id=EB58703C6EAA05AEF9BA6B982AD79240EE2D68C1&first=0)s started out in Africa. The remains were about two million years old!!!! Another archeological find in Germany was very important. The artifact was a strange skull of a race of early humans called Neanderthals. The skull was strange because it had a very thick skull and a low forehead. This probably disabled its thinking skills. Some of the artifacts the archeologists found in the Great Rift Valley were old stone tools. These tools were the things that early humans used in the “Old Stone Age”. During this age people used simple tools made out of stone, bone, and wood. The scientific name for this period of time was the Paleolithic Era. This era lasted from about 70,000 years ago to about 12,000 years ago. This time lasted during the Ice Age when the Earth’s climate was colder and glaciers, snow, and ice ruled most of the continents. During this time the early people also used fire for warmth and to cook food. Learning how to use fire was an essential element for the early people. The early people needed food. The people who got that food were called Hunter-Gatherers. They hunted animals with stone and wood weapons and collected plants that were available.

12,000 years ago the ice age was ending and the Paleolithic era was ending. The early humans were changing in many ways. One way was that their diets started to change. For example, they had more access to plants and vegetation. They also started making better shelters and forming little communities. One huge way they were changing was that the Neanderthals one race of early people were becoming extinct. Another race of early humans the Cr[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Prehistoric+Man&view=detail&id=B055ECBDDF95C26A15FE45B676B92C0704E4978F&first=0)o-Magnons who were like us and a lot smarter than the Neanderthals were dominating the earth now. The way humans were using tools was changing too. The Old Stone Age was over. The early humans were starting to use metals to use as tools. They used bronze and added copper to the bronze to strengthen it. The “Bronze Age” was beginning. A new era was beginning, The Neolithic Era was beginning!

Chapter Two : The Neolithic Era

Now it is the Neolithic Era this period of time lasted from about 12,000 years ago to about 6,000 years ago. In this era agriculture, domestication, permanent living, and trading were beginning. New tools were being used and the Earths human population was evolving.

The ice age was over and the Neolithic people started to live new lives. Groups of people began to permanently settle in places with abundant resources so they did not need hunter-gatherers anymore. People used to have to follow herds and move their shelters but now they could live permanently. With this innovation people began to domesticate animals instead of chasing around their herds. Domestication was when people began to capture animals and[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Neolithic&view=detail&id=593C6AB7A5C936FAF513C5C0FB6B0679CD7D7C37&first=0) keep them for food instead of always hunting wild animals for food. With all these extra plants, grain, and meat they now needed to store this surplus of food. A surplus is an extra amount of something, in this case food. This is something that the hunter-gatherers never had! Growing these grains and vegetation for the Neolithic communities is called agriculture. Agriculture is almost like the domestication of plants so instead of searching in the wild for edible plants the Neolithic people grew their own food near where they live.

The early civilization was beginning. One of the first cities was Catal Huyuk in modern day Turkey. There archeologists found remains of a very old city. The people’s houses were all bunched together horizontally like an apartment building on its side. People came into their houses on the houses roof. People in the early cities such as Catal Huyuk began specializing in jobs. For example, there were artisans, farmers, builders, and other jobs [](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Neolithic&view=detail&id=3DB042256A7EF179D41F1F124FB4DF7B15BD4816&first=0)that are vital to ancient communities. Catal Huyuk was making many interesting items from pots to woven baskets. Parents taught their children to make what they made as their job in the community. The people also made copper and bronze tolls and goods now.

With all of these goods people came to Catal Huyuk to trade for the cities many goods. The idea of trading spread and then the trading and exchanging of goods was born. The innovations of the Neolithic era greatly changed the lives of all early humans. With all of these innovations there were bound to be more. Great years were to come now!

Chapter Three: Ancient Mesopotamia

[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Mesopotamia&view=detail&id=2059778A2737F5FADE199ABDA979CFE464568A88&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR) Ancient Mesopotamia “The Land Between The Rivers”, [because it was in between two rivers: the Tigris and Euphrates] began when the descendants of the Biblical character Noah came across the sun scorched plain of Mesopotamia to get into the region of Sumer. The plains of Mesopotamia were in a region called the fertile crescent which was a region in the middle east where there was fertile farming area and land. Sumer was southern Mesopotamia. They started building one of the most famous and one of the first cities of Mesopotamia: Babylon. They built a huge tower to show off their power. That tower was called the Tower of Babel. It was the beginning of ancient Mesopotamia. Unfortunately the building on the tower was stopped and the first era of Mesopotamia was over.

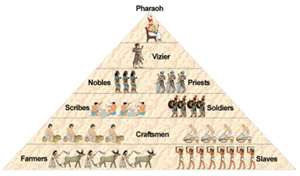
Babylon was re-occupied by other people, but that is later, now let’s talk about other pla[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Mesopotamia&view=detail&id=A64F04E39CF3587531B9F3DF5FD584146AB226A5&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)ces in Mesopotamia. Such as Ur, Uruk and other cities. Some cities formed together and made city states: a city that controls territory around it but not a country. At one time a group of city states formed a small kingdom called the Sumerian Kingdom. The cities in it were Ur, Uruk, Nippur, and other communities. Now, let’s get back to Babylon so other people occupied the city and were rebuilding it. The new[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Mesopotamia&view=detail&id=F1D33E667D800D811832862FF99DFDD486C9582E&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR) king was Hammurabi one of the greatest kings of Babylon. He made an empire that held all of the region of Mesopotamia. There were three threats to his empire though ,but now let’s get to the good part of his capital city and empire. He made the first written code of law: the Hammurabi code. Though the discipline in his code was harsh, it brought order to the land. As an example: “If a citizen breaks another citizen’s bone he will have his bone broken”. The code was on a black clay tablet. People w[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Mesopotamia&view=detail&id=C253C8C70C001AD2D31664E7B1370B526352CB5E&first=31&FORM=IDFRIR)ho wrote documents were called scribes. They had to go to school and learn to write and how to do math to make accurate records and calculations. They wrote on wet, clay tablets. Their written language was cuneiform. Now let’s get back to talking about the empires enemies. The Hittite empire in modern day Turkey was in the north, the Assyrian Empire to the west, and barbaric tribes to the east. These empires were already invading and shrinking Hammurabi’s empire. One empire: the Assyrian Empire attacked Babylon and defeated the cities defenders. They destroyed the city and then the first great age of Babylon was over but a better age was to come!

[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Mesopotamia&view=detail&id=11995770EBCCC6FD63ED01D9F8E1329703E8167B&first=61&FORM=IDFRIR) The city was again occupied by other foreigners and was rising again. Their new king was Nebechunezer. Once the city was organized and had an equipped army they attacked the capital of Assyria and destroyed it wholesale! With their victory in Assyria the Babylonians now went to conquer modern day Israel. They captured Jerusalem and occupied most of the area of Isr[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Mesopotamia&view=detail&id=CC35FE2795F433C8B6AC1D3E8EC399A46FE48616&first=31&FORM=IDFRIR)ael .Nebechunezer set up a puppet king in Jerusalem but he was quickly overthrown. Than Nebechunezer took action and sieged Jerusalem and defeated the cities army! They destroyed the whole entire city and took the surviving population [mostly women and children] back to Babylon as prisoners. When the captives from Jerusalem walked through the cities processional way and the Ishtar Gate the city of Babylon was at the height of its glorious power! Along the processional way on that [became the main city road] on the right there was a Ziggurat or square based somewhat staircase pyramid with a temple on top. The Mesopotamians [including the Babylonians] worshipped many gods. This type of worship common to ancient civilizations was called Polytheism. For example, one Babylonian god named Ishtar was the goddess of love and beauty [yes this was who the gate on the processional way was named after]. Now once again, Babylon’s fate was in trouble. Daniel one Jewish captive on Nebechunezer’s court had a dream from god showing three beasts in order. Each beast got stronger as the dream went on. The fthree beasts were the three empires that would conquer the city of Babylon and surrounding Mesopotamia. In order the conquering empires went: Medo-Persians, Greeks, and Romans. A few kings after Nebechunezer, The Medo-Persians were attacking Babylon with an ingenious battle plan during the reign of Belshazzar. They attacked and overran Babylon and all of Mesopotamia. The next empire to conquer Mesopotamia was Greece when Alexander the Great marched in and took the region. After that the Romans controlled the region. The age of Mesopotamia as a striving region became a place for empires to tramp on and control. Mesopotamia was a mighty ancient civilization but, there were other ancient civilizations with the glory of Mesopotamia!

Chapter Four: Ancient Egypt

The Kingdom of Ancient Egypt was located in the north-eastern area of Africa. A great river ran through it. This mighty river was the Nile River. This river started in modern-day Ethiopia and emptied into the M[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Egypt&view=detail&id=E1A96769EA50C70A447A820CA0AE4BE2B195B760&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)editerranean Sea. Around the River was fertile area good for many things.

The Nile River was very vital to the population of ancient Egypt. It was where their farms were and where they grew their food. It was also their main source of transportation. There were two sections of the kingdom of Egypt, lower Egypt and upper Egypt. Upper Egypt was the southern half of the kingdom and lower Egypt was the northern half of the kingdom. If I was a farmer in upper Egypt and wanted to sell my produce in Memphis, [the capital of the empire during the era of the Old Kingdom] I would float up the river to get to lower Egypt, then I would travel on land back to my farm once I was done selling my produce. All of the land around the Nile is fertile and good for growing crops. The people needed water to grow their plants. They used a system called irrigation. One way the people irrigated the water was they made long ditches in their crops and then used a shadoof to lift the water from the Nile into the ditches and made little rivers to water their crops. The Egyptians also were a center of trade. During the era of the New Kingdom when the Egyptians conquered Nubia [a kingdom with the largest and richest gold mines of the ancient world] they were in the middle of a great trade route. This trade route was the Mediterranean Sea. The empires or city states the Egyptians traded with were the Persians, the Greek city states, and the early Romans in Italy. The Egyptians traded gold and metal statues and other riches. The port cities of the Nile Delta [where the Nile emptied] were where the goods were shipped from. This brought Egypt the wealth it needed. Without the Nile River Egypt would not have been as great as it was. [](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Egypt&view=detail&id=F272640E152E9927CD30CC100E45E7236150013F&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)

Egypt had an interesting cultural and political kingdom too. The people of ancient Egypt had a king called a Pharaoh. He was given a divine right to rule over Egypt and was worshipped as a god on Earth. It was said that he was the son of Ra, the sun god. The Pharaoh had a chief wife who was the queen of Egypt. She was second in command of Egypt. When a pharaoh died there was a great funeral procession. He was buried in royal tombs or Pyramids. One good example of pyramids is the pyramids at Giza. Pyramids were made to help the Pharaohs travel into the afterlife with ease. Other types of tombs were buried under the ground in places such as the Valley of the Kings. The Egyptians were Polytheistic people such as the people of Mesopotamia. Though, one king named Akhenaton abolished all other gods and put one sun god as the only god. This practice of having only one god was called monotheism. This type worship was very rare in the ancient world. Most Egyptian people did not tolerate it. Akhenaton changed his kingdom even more by changing the capital from Thebes [the first capital of the new kingdom] to Amarna. After Akhenaton died the people of Egypt restored their old capital and religion. His son, Tutankhamen was the pharaoh when the old Egyptians gods were out back into power. In the Egyptian society there were different levels of status. Exactly like most other ancient civilizations the Egyptians had slaves. Slaves were at the bottom level of Egyptian society. The people of Egypt had Scribes to write [](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Egypt&view=detail&id=1FE9DBEB846F76260950C224EE204B408136732A&first=31&FORM=IDFRIR)documents, economic stocks, and carvings on temples. Scribes were about average in Egyptian society. It really depended on who the scribe worked for. If he worked for the pharaoh he would be considered in high society. On the other hand, if he worked for a poor famer or businessman he would be an average Egyptian citizen. The form of writing they used is called Hieroglyphics. This form of writing was pictures and symbols that had meanings. Of course the Pharaoh was the most powerful because he was king. After him was his chief wife, priests, his court of advisors, royal scribes, and so on.

The history of Egypt was not all peace though. The kingdom of Egypt had many enemies. Before the era of the New Kingdom started Egypt was occupied by foreign powers. Controlling Lower Egypt were the Hyskos, a civilization from north Africa. Pushing back the border of Egypt in the south were the Nubians, a war-like civilization who controlled most of modern day northern Sudan. Their civilization was also around the Nile River. They were in control of the largest and richest [](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Egypt&view=detail&id=83F73800A4058872F33864049ACA6D8D6BD4ABAC&first=91&FORM=IDFRIR)gold mines in the ancient world. In the middle of both the attackers a pocket of southern Egypt remained. Eventually, Egypt defeated both enemies and conquered Nubia which gave them the rich gold mines. Later in the history of the New Kingdom the Egyptians had a new enemy, the Hittites. The Hittites controlled modern day Turkey. The Hittite army had powerful Iron weapons. No other ancient civilizations had acquired this metal yet. Egypt knew that after the recent battle they could not defeat the Hittites. They met and made a peace treaty and became allies. Even farther into the era of the new kingdom the “sea peoples” [Persians] conquered the Hittite empire and destroyed an ally of Egypt. Then, the Persians conquered Egypt. During Alexander the Great’s army marched into Egypt and defeated the Persians.

Egypt had a powerful empire and left a great legacy for all modern day countries to follow. Without Egypt the world would not be how it is today. Now let’s move on to another ancient civilization, Greece.

Chapter Five: Ancient Greece

The empires and city states of Ancient Greece were influential civilizations that shaped our world today. Greece is a mountainous peninsula sticking out of Europe into the Mediterranean Sea . At first, nobody thought that one day it would control a gigantic empire that stretched from the Greek peninsula to the rainforests of India.

In the[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Greece&view=detail&id=95C10ACD9F40135C9746DC63948FE0961053C7D8&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR) early history of ancient Greece many city states carved up the land. City states are cities that control land around them. Two powerful city states were Athens and Sparta. Sparta was even more powerful than Athens in early times. Sparta was a city state that controlled most of southern Peloponnesus, a large peninsula of Greece. When the Spartan army gained control of a city, they enslaved the population and forced them to work to sustain the city state. All Spartan men were born to be soldiers and to fight for Sparta. Athens was not as militaristically cruel as Sparta. At first, Athens was a small farming community ruled by aristocrats. This form of government was called oligarchy ,where the wealthiest citizens controlled all of the city’s matters. The city’s patron goddess was Athena, the Greek god of wisdom. The Greeks were polytheistic people who worshipped more than one god. Zeus was the chief god, Athena was the goddess of wisdom, Poseidon was the god of the sea, Dionysus was the god of wine, and there were more gods who controlled different things or ideals. These aristocrats lived on top of the Acropolis. All of Athens temples were also on the Acropolis. The Acropolis was a rocky plateau in the center of the city. One man marched into Athens with a woman at his side. He demanded that he be the sole ruler of Athens. He claimed that the woman next to him was Athena. The woman said that he must be ruler. The citizens of Athens believed the hoax and made him the sole ruler of Athens. This man’s name was Piesistratis [ his information is from the documentary “Greeks Crucible of Civilization”]. He made a monarchy of Athens. Monarchy is when one ruler controls a city or country. After a while the citizens rebelled and overthrew their king. They chose one man to organize their new governme[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Greece&view=detail&id=37C906F5AE4A7E180EF069EEF7B9F6C8317A5687&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)nt. That man’s name was. Solon, a nobleman, formed a new system of government called democracy. In this brand new form of government all citizens got to go to an assembly and vote on important matters. This was the birth of modern day democracy. During this time Athens was gaining territory. It was also trading its many goods with other civilizations such as Egypt and the early Romans. One leader named Pericles made Athens more powerful than it ever was before. After the Persians sacked Athens, Pericles built a temple to Athena on the Acropolis. This temple is called the Parthenon. It is one of the most iconic symbols of ancient Greece. Athens was also the birth place of drama and philosophy. The Athenian people loved drama. Athenian plays were called tragedies because they often had horrible tragedies in them. Two great philosophers named Aristotle and Plato [](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Greece&view=detail&id=54EB9394CB72EB56EC9BB6D22213F024E9A6E322&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)shaped the way that we think today. Philosophy is thinking about the world and life from a new angle Athens’ main threat was Sparta. They had fought in many battles against each other. Athens had one military advantage that gave her the upper hand. Athens had a powerful navy of Triremes. Triremes are ships had two floors for rowing to make it faster than other ships. It also had an underwater ram to ram into ships. This advantage granted the Athenians mostly victories at sea. The story was way different on land. After a grand strategy to defeat the Spartans failed, Athens was captured and the golden age of Athens was over.

After the end of the golden age of Athens one man from a region of Greece called Macedonia united all of the city states of Greece except for[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Ancient+Greece+Alexander+the+Great&view=detail&id=E9E3478B2EFB373352D8E4A559D3B6E7AFF4EA77&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR) Sparta. This man’s name was Philip II. He was the father of Alexander the Great. Alexander was born in Macedonia in northern Greece. Alexander’s father and mother shaped how his personality was. He was also inspired by his mentor, Aristotle. Aristotle taught him about the Greek stories and myths such as the Odyssey by a famous poet named Homer. He was inspired by the hero Odysseus who was the main character of the Odyssey. Alexander was also inspired by the myth of Achilles. In the myth Achilles was offered a choice. He could, live a long boring life, or live a short life with fame on the battlefield. He chose the short life and died on the battlefield as a hero. After his father died Alexander became king of united Greece besides Sparta. Alexander and his military went out on a quest to conquer the world. He conquered the whole Persian Empire [Egypt, Turkey, Israel, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, northern Egypt, and Kuwait] and the north western region of India. Alexander died in his thirties after he had conquered a vast empire. Alexander’s empire was captured by the Romans and Ottomans after Greece fell.

Without the Greeks western civilization would not be how it is today. The influential city states that became a huge empire impacted us in ways we can never forget.

Chapter Six: Ancient Rome

The Roman’s gigantic empire, powerful citizens, and conquering rulers, made it a powerful civilization of the ancient world. It had technology, government, laws, and innovations that we still use today.

The city of Rome was located on the Italian peninsula in the Latium Valley. The Latium valley was next to a river called the Tiber River. The Italian peninsula was at the border of the Eurasian plate and the African plate. In the Mediterranean Sea there are many volcanoes and earthquakes in that area. One of the most famous volcanoes of all time is Mount Vesuvius in the Bay of Naples on the Italian peninsula. It exploded and decimated a city called Pompeii. Rome was in a quieter area with less volcanoes and mountains. It was an ideal place to build a city.

Before the founding of Rome one empire controlled most of the Italian peninsula. This empire was the Etruscan Empire. The Etruscans controlled the Etrurian Valley north of where Rome was located. Two men named Romulus and Remus founded Rome in 735 B.C. as a small city of mud huts on a hill overlooking the Tiber River. It evolved into a small, but prosperous city. The Etruscans gained control of Rome and ruled it. Rome was a small, but prosperous, city under Etruscan rule. Traders sailed down the Tiber River to trade across the Mediterranean. Eventually, Rome became a very important city to the Etruscans.

The early Romans did not want to stay under the rule of the Etruscans though. They rebelled and kicked the Etruscans out of Rome in 502 B.C. The Romans set up a government in which citizens had greater power. The Romans improved their city by building a bridge across the Tiber River and making a marketplace called the Forum. Wealthy citizens built fine brick homes on top of hills. Another hill had a great stone temple on top of it. The citizens of Rome were divided into two groups, the Plebeians and the Patricians. Most Roman citizens were plebeians. Plebeians were middle or lower class farmers, craftsman, and tradespeople. The patricians were members of the noble families of Rome. They owned large, wealthy farms and had plebeians work on them. Rome had few slaves in its early history so plebeians worked on the large farms. The patricians were the leaders of the Roman government. They were the only citizens who could be on the ruling assembly or be government leaders. In 494 B.C. the plebeians rebelled against the patricians. The plebeians demanded dramatic change in the current government. The new form of government they wanted was called a Republic. The republic of Rome lasted for nearly 500 years. In a republic the people get to choose their leaders. The people of Rome also elected representatives to represent them in the Roman government. Representatives represented groups of people in congress and state legislatures. Not all citizens in Rome were equal though. The more money or power a man had, the more his vote was worth in an election or vote. The republic of Rome had three governmental branches. The Senate, Tribunes, and Consuls. The senate was the most powerful form of government. It was controlled by the patricians of Rome. It was in control of foreign relations and the money of Rome. The Tribunes were the representatives of the plebeians. They also lead the citizen assembly. They protected the rights of then plebeians in the republic and made the republic more representative. The Consuls were army commanders and powerful judges. They were elected by the citizen assembly. They proposed new laws, but the assembly could veto the laws. After a law activated in 367 B.C. one of the Consuls had to be a plebian to have fair representation. The plebeians now could complain to the senate now.

Before the founding of Rome’s republic only the patricians knew the laws of Rome. During that time the plebeians could not know the laws of the city. That resulted in plebeians being mistreated and plebeians not following the law. In 450 B.C. the plebeians demanded that they know the law and get fair trials. After that, the patricians wrote a set of laws on twelve bronze tablets, known as the twelve tables. The tablets were posted in the Forum. A citizen could come to these tablets and see a judge to present their case.

Now Rome, in 264 B.C., controlled the whole entire Italian peninsula and a quarter of the island of Sicily. The new enemy opposing Rome was the Carthaginian empire. They controlled northwest Africa, southeast Spain, Corsica, Sardinia, and the other three quarters of Sicily. The capital city of the Carthaginian Empire was Carthage, a city in modern day Tunisia. The romans wanted Carthage’s land. In the First Punic War, that lasted twenty years, the island of Sicily was conquered by Rome. After that victory Rome seized more Carthaginian land. One general named Hamilcar, leader of the Carthaginians in Spain, taught his son, Hannibal to hate the Romans. In 218 B.C., Hannibal turned 29 and lead the Carthaginian army to destroy Rome in the Second Punic War. Hannibal’s plan was to march through southern Spain and France, go through the Alps, and then attack Rome form the north. Hannibal’s plan was working, but he eventually got trapped in Italy with scarce supplies and was forced to retreat to Tunisia. The Roman general that defeated Hannibal was named Scipio Africanus. He followed Hannibal into Tunisia and defeated him at Zama in 202 B.C.. Rome now claimed all of Carthage’s land. Rome’s borders were now expanding and Rome conquered the Balkan region and Greece. Rome was now taking slaves from conquered civilizations to work for Rome.

The Romans controlled most of the Mediterranean by 100 B.C., though this greatness was overshadowed by problems with the government in the city of Rome. In 100 B.C. Julius Caesar was born. His parents were wealthy, upper class patricians. In his early years he took many positions in the government and the army. Caesar was elected consul of Rome in 59 B.C. He acquired status of the Military Governor of Roman Gaul. Roman Gaul was modern day France. At the time, Rome only controlled southern France. Caesar gained control of the rest of France, giving Rome access to the English Channel. The senate worried about Caesar’s growing wealth and authority. In 49 B.C. the senate ordered Caesar to come back to Rome without his army. Instead, he and his army went across the Rubicon River into Italy. This action caused a civil war in Rome. Caesar’s competitor was Pompey, who he defeated. After this Caesar went to Egypt and helped Cleopatra, ruler of Egypt, defeat her rival brother. In return, Cleopatra gave Caesar money to continue his campaign to control Rome. In 45 B.C. Caesar returned to control Rome and made himself a dictator. A dictator is someone who completely controls a government. During Caesar’s dictatorship, he made many important changes in Roman government. Some of these changes were he increased the number of people in the senate, he granted people not born in Rome Roman citizenship, he gave free land to his soldiers, and free grain to the poor. Many senators were scared and threatened of Caesar’s growing power. In 44 B.C. Julius Caesar was killed by senators in the Roman senate.

After Caesars death Rome was plunged into another civil war. Caesar’s grandnephew Octavian defeated all of his enemies. In 27 B.C. Octavian became the imperator of Rome. Today we would call him the emperor of Rome. He ruled from 31 B.C. to 14 A.D. To show off his power he changed his new name to Augustus. The month of August is named after him. Augustus reformed Rome during his reign by governmental efficiency, new roads, new buildings, and new water systems. He started a period called Pax Romana. In Latin this means Roman peace. This era lasted for 200 years. Augustus installed a police force and fire prevention force in Rome. Other luxuries in Rome were public baths and the Colosseum. In the Colosseum the people of Rome watched games with gladiators and wild beasts. There were so many people in Rome that the governors and judges of Rome made a census to keep track of all of the people. Every five years the government of Rome counted all of the people of the empire and made a census.

During the Pax Romana period Rome had advanced technology to help maintain Rome’s massive empire. One important technological skill that the Romans had was their building skill. Throughout the history of Rome the empire conducted great building projects. Those building projects produced great aqueducts, bridges, and public baths. All of these advancements in society were built to help the people of Rome. Bridges helped armies and people move with ease. Aqueducts flowed fresh water to Rome’s sprawling cities. One effective building style that Rome used was the building of arches in projects. Arches were effective in building projects because they could hold very heavy amounts of weight. One effective material the Romans used was concrete. They used concrete to build most of their major building projects because it was a strong material and could hold lots more weight than stone.

The Pax Romana brought Rome great power and wealth. Though, now barbaric tribes from the northeast were coming down into the Roman Empire. The Pax Romana was now over and the Roman Empire was crumbling. The barbarians were now on a rampage through the western half of the empire and sacking towns and cities. In 284 A.D. an emperor named Diocletian decided that the empire was too big to rule with one ruler. He decided to split the Roman Empire into two parts, the western half, and the eastern half. Diocletian took control of the eastern empire. Now, Rome was not the most powerful city of the empire. The power had shifted from the east, to the west. Diocletian retired in 305 A.D. Constantine now took control of the eastern empire. He moved the capital of the empires from Rome to a city in modern day Turkey called Byzantium. He renamed it, and now called it Constantinople. This city is now called Istanbul. Unlike his predecessor, Diocletian, Constantine did not persecute Christians, a new religious group. While the eastern empire’s power grew, the western empire’s power declined. The barbaric tribes were now pushing extremely far into the western empire. The Visigoths had now plundered the city of Rome and the western empire was now crumbling into little pockets of territory. Gaul and Britannia [southern Britain] had now fallen and Spain was being looted. The Western Roman Empire had now fallen apart. With the fall of the Western Roman Empire the newly named Byzantine Empire now the only Roman Empire, a new king came into power in 527 A.D. named Justinian.

The Roman Empire was a gigantic influence on the world as it is today. Its legacy shaped our world and inspired us to be like we are today.  
 Chapter seven: The Middle Ages

After the fall of Rome, Europe was plunged into an era that we called the Middle Ages that lasted from 500 to the 1400s. Some people also call this era the Dark Ages because during this time most people lived in poverty or hardship and horrific events happened.

In around 700 Europe was controlled by many different kingdoms and empires. Some of those empires were: the Byzantine Empire, the Frankish Kingdoms, the Visigothic Kingdom, the Lombard Kingdoms, the Anglo Saxon Kingdoms, and the Slavic Kingdoms. One man who came from one of the many kingdoms of Western Europe named Charles Martel had an important grandson named Charlemagne, or “Charles the Great”. Chralemagne conquered lands in France, Italy, and Germany. He got baptized into the Roman Catholic Faith and spread it throughout his empire. When Charlemagne’s army marched into the city of Rome most people consider it his greatest triumph. The leader of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Leo II crowned him an emperor. In his court in Aachen, Germany Charlemagne set up a school. He applied to the school to learn how to read and write. Most kings and citizens did not learn how to read or write in their whole entire lives. Charlemagne, king of the Frankish Empire, died in 814. His son Louis took control of the empire. After Louis’ death his sons divided the empire into three parts. Western Europe was plunged into chaos again.

After Charlemagne’s reign tribes from the east, sea raiders, and pirates were tearing the continent apart and terrorizing the people of the Middle Ages. The northern raiders from Scandinavia, an area north of mainland Europe, were called Vikings. After their plundering raids in Europe the Vikings settled in England and Ireland as their new homes. They Vikings also made colonies in Iceland, Greenland, and even in Canada!

In 911, following the Viking raids, Charlemagne’s grandson gave the Vikings the land around the Seine River. Today we would call this place Normandy, which is the coast of northwestern France. The Vikings adopted many French customs, the French language, and the religion of Christianity. In 1066 the duke of Normandy, named William crossed the English Channel, the gap between Britain and France, and invaded Britain with an army of 5,000 knights. He defeated the Anglo-Saxon kingdom and conquered it. He became known as William the Conqueror. After he conquered Britain, he brought many French ideals to the island. The English language was spoken by the mixed Norman and French people.

In most Middle Age societies and civilizations a government called Feudalism was most common. Feudalism was made to keep peace in Europe. In feudalism Kings and other powerful landowners divided up land into areas called Fiefs. The king who controlled the fiefs gave the fiefs to Nobles. The wealthy nobles would then swear loyalty to the king who gave them the fief. When nobles swore loyalty to a king they were named Vassals. The vassals usually agreed to become knights in a king’s army. A knight is an advanced soldier in a king’s army because he is not a standard foot soldier, he is like a high ranking officer in today’s armies. Knights usually fought on horseback with metal armor, a spear or a sword, and a shield. Knights needed to follow a code of conduct called chivalry. Along with having to know how to fight, knights had to know music and poetry. A knight also was required to be a Christian and to also fight for the sake of the church.

When the vassals took ownership of a fief, they usually gained control of the peasants who lived and worked on the land. These peasants were called Serfs. A settlement of serfs on a fief was called a Manor. A common manor would usually have the serf’s houses, a church, and maybe a mill or stables to work in.

The vassals had duties to their king, so the king had to listen to and show respect to the vassals. In England, in 1215 the king of England named King John was forced by his vassals to sign a document. This document was called the Magna Carta. This means “Great Charter” in Latin. It said that the king could not take away or diminish the rights of free men by taxing them unjustly or unfair demand of labor and goods.

During the early Middle Ages the living conditions were bad. War between kings and disease outbreaks were common. Most newborns died at a very early age due to the conditions. Over time, the conditions of life started to improve for most people. Towns, better trading systems, and more efficient farming techniques were reviving. Farmers and peasants were now making more money that they used to improve their living conditions. Now that normal towns were popping up, commoners did not have to become serfs on Manors. Also people did not have to be mainly farmers anymore. Now that towns and cities were reappearing there was more demand for skilled workers, such as blacksmiths, tax collectors, tradesmen, sailors, and other workers. These men were called craftsmen. Craftsmen made products for people in society to use. Salesmen sold the Craftsmen’s products. Craftsmen usually had an apprentice. An apprentice is someone who wishes to learn the skill of a craftsman. They would go on a journey once they completed their time as an apprentice, and become a journeyman. A journeyman was a young craftsman who is trying to find a town or city that needed a craftsman of his craft. Once he found a place to practice and make his craft, he could now teach an apprentice.

One major conflict of the Middle Ages was religious tension. The two major religious rivals were the Christians and the Muslims. The Muslims had a huge empire to the south, controlling: southern Spain, north Africa, inner [noncoastal] Turkey, and land past Iraq to Afghanistan. The Byzantine Empire and the rest of Europe were Christian lands. There was lots of tension between the two cultures. One major area of conflict was Spain. That was where the European Christians and the Muslims collided. In a long war called the Reconquista, that lasted from 718 to 1492!

In 1095 Pope Urban II ordered a long war of conquest to capture Jerusalem and other areas where Christianity was born. The Christians called this place the Holy Land, which is now most of modern day Israel. These wars were called the Crusades. In the First Crusade the Christians claimed the Holy Land and held it for 100 years. The Muslims later reclaimed the Holy Land. There were seven more Crusades, but the Muslims still held the Holy Land. During the Crusades more contact was established with the Byzantine Empire. Eastern culture and goods were arriving in the west.

In Siena, Italy, a bustling European city, a plague started to break out. It was carried from an unknown place by bacteria in rats. This plague spread quickly from person to person. This plague is called the Bubonic Plague. Its nickname is the Black Death. This plague wiped out a third of the population of Europe over the next 130 years.

The Middle Ages, or Dark Ages, are over and Europe is repairing itself from war, plague, and tragedy. The next major period in history after the Middle Ages is the Renaissance.

Chapter Eight: The Renaissance and Reformation

The Renaissance began in the Italian city state of Florence. The Renaissance means Rebirth in French. The Renaissance was a time of artistic creativity and scientific advances. Many people of the Renaissance were very religious, Thought they developed an interest in Humanism, which is the concern of Human interest.

Florence was one of the richest cities in Europe at around 3500, when the Renaissance began. The city of Florence got much of its wealth from banking and trading goods. The wealthiest families in Florence were the Medici family. A famous leader of Florence was Lorenzo Medici, a member of the Medici family. Some people said the Medici was a tyrant, but most people liked that he was a patron, or supporter of the arts. Lorenzo supported many scholars and artists work and that is why many artists flocked to Florence.

Starting in the 1200s, writers began to only write in their own languages so they could sell it to the local people. One famous Italian poet named Petrarch supported this idea. He believed that the great Roman and Greek poems and written works. Petrarch wrote in Italian about the enjoyment of literature and reading. Another Italian writer, born in Venice in 1364, named Christine de Pisan was a famous woman writer of the Renaissance. She spent most of her life in France. Unlike most women Renaissance writers, Christine wrote poems, histories, and political pieces. Niccolo Machiavelli, another writer from Florence wrote specifically about government and politics. His book *The Prince* gives rulers advice about how to rule their kingdoms. He lived from 1469 to 1527.

Many Renaissance writers studied Roman and Greek works. The artists eventually learned a style of art called perspective, which makes a painting look real by making objects look far away or up close. That is why many Renaissance paintings are more realistic than paintings from the middle Ages. The Renaissance painters started changing the subject of their paintings from religious works, to more Roman and Greek style subjects. The most famous painter of the Renaissance was Leonardo Divinci. Leonardo lived from 1452 to 1519. He was not just a painter; he was also an engineer, musician, and scientist. His patron or supporter was Lorenzo Medici. Medici loved his talented work so much; he let Leonardo Da Vinci set up a studio in his own garden! One of Leonardo’s most famous paintings is the Mona Lisa. Some say Leonardo based the painting on his wife. The Mona Lisa took years to paint! Michelangelo was another famous Renaissance artist. He lived from 1475 to 1564. He, like others, used Greek and Roman ideas in his sculptures and paintings. One of his most famous works, *David*, is based on a Greek or Roman mythical hero. Also his paintings on the wall of the Sistine chapel, in Rome, show biblical stories and tales.

The Renaissance started expanding beyond Italy into the rest of Europe in the 1400s. Even more works of art, plays, scientific theories, and writings were appearing in Europe. People from northern Europe came to Italy and brought back the ideals and styles Renaissance to the rest of Europe. The two most famous people who did this were Thomas More and Erasmus. These two men became humanists and friends.

One of the most famous writers of the Renaissance, that wasn’t from Italy, was William Shakespeare. He was born in 1564. He became an actor poet and playwright. Shakespeare died in 1616 with the accomplishment of writing 37 plays and 154 poetry pieces.

The Renaissance was a major turning point in the history of Europe. It led Europe from a time of uncertainty, to a time of many advances in the arts and new ways of living life. People no longer lived under cruel kings and work and live in a manor. Government, business, and trade all improved with banking and other innovations.

Many people, including Martin Luther, a German monk, wanted to reform the Church of Rome. He hung a paper on a cathedral door stating 95 theses, or complaints about the church that he wanted reformed. He only wanted to reform the church, but he started a movement called the Reformation, that eventually split the church apart.

One important system in the church Luther wanted abolished was the sale of indulgences. Indulgences were instant forgiveness of sins without confessing them to a priest and praying for forgiveness. You got indulgences by paying to the church. Pope Leo X was building a church in Rome and sold indulgences in Germany to raise money.

The people who protested alongside Luther were called Protestants because they protested against the church. There were also other protestant leaders, such as John Calvin who formed the protestant Calvinist Church. Martin Luther formed the Lutheran Church. Eventually there were many different protestant churches across Europe.

One king named Henry VIII of England was having problems with the church’s laws. He needed a son to rule after him, but his wife Queen Katherine, had had many babies, but none of them was a boy. He wanted a new wife that would produce an heir. He wanted to divorce, but the pope would not let him. Henry made his own church, that he had control of, called the Anglican Church. He cut of relations with the Pope of Rome and spread his new church over England.

After battles and protests the Church finally knew it had to reform. They reformed many systems in a council that lasted from 1545 to 1563 in Trent, Italy. The protestant churches still did not want to rejoin the church.

War broke out in Germany in 1529, between the Catholics and Protestants. The war ended in 1555 when a treaty settled the war by letting each territory worship its own religion. There were many other conflicts between churches. Europe would always be religiously divided from then on. The power of churches was weakened. Now, local rulers controlled their religion more than a pope.

The Reformation changed Europe and the church forever. The religion of a country was not the country’s government or involved in government. Many things were also reformed in the Catholic Church.

At the time of the Renaissance and beyond, there was a time of Scientific Revolution. In this time many superstitions were diminished, and many new inventions and theories still shape our world today.

One of the most important theories diminished during the era of scientific innovations was a theory about the sun and the Earth. Many people thought that the Earth was the center of the universe, and that the moon and the sun orbited the Earth. The church agreed with this theory. One scientist; Nicolaus Copernicus, disagreed and thought that the sun was the center of the universe. He thought that the Earth and the stars orbited the sun. This new theory caused lots of commotion in society. People now started to wonder if that new theory was right.

The Italian scientist; Galileo Galilei, was born in Italy in 1564. One of his most famous theories was if heavier object fell faster than lighter objects. The Greek Aristotle said that heavier objects fall faster than lighter objects. Galileo thought that theory was wrong, because he saw hail balls of different weights and sizes reach the ground at the same time. He experimented that theory by dropping two different size and weight balls off of the Leaning Tower of Pisa. He proved that his theory was right, because both the balls landed on the ground at the same time. Galileo also studied astronomy, which was a new study at the time. He improved the commonly used, Dutch telescope and sold his new design to the military forces of Venice. The church and most people thought that the Earth was the center of the universe and everything just simply rotated around it. Galileo disagreed with that theory and had proof to discourage it by using his new telescope. One of his most important discoveries was that the Earth is spinning on an axis and orbiting the sun at the same time. He convinced many people that this theory was correct. Galileo’s findings were published in 1613.

Though many now agreed with his theories from his publishing’s, the Roman Catholic Church disagreed. They thought Galileo’s and Copernicus’ theory was against the church. They threatened to arrest Galileo if he did not stop writing about his theory. Galileo’s books were banned in many places across Europe. Galileo was not allowed to leave his home too. In 1633 he was arrested and tried before a church court. He was told to abandon his heliocentric theory. He agreed to give up the idea, but it was hard for him, because he knew his theory was right.

Isaac Newton was born in 1742, in England, the same day that Galileo died. Isaac Newton was also a very important scientist, carrying on Galileo’s legacy of Gravity. He figured out that Gravity was what kept the moon from flying off into space. He significantly helped the future study of the heliocentric universe. Newton also created a new study in mathematics called calculus. Along with Newton’s study of gravity, he studied motion and made many theories and principles about motion. Lastly, Newton also studied color and light. Newton used a prism that separates light, to show that light is made up of multiple bands of color all bonded together. He helped develop the modern day Spectroscope with his studies.

In 1596, in France, Rene’ Descartes was born. He thought the European Scientific Method, called Deductive Reasoning, was set backwards. He developed the Scientific Method, which starts with a question, and ends with a conclusion of all the facts that the experiment proved. The European deductive reasoning method had it all backwards.

The Era of Scientific Advancement continued further into history and impacted our world, by giving us reasoning skills, theories, and facts that we still use and follow today.

The Age Of Exploration was a time of exploring and adventuring into far away, or even unknown lands! One famous explorer, who many believed started the age of exploration, was Marco Polo. He traveled along the Silk Road through central Asia and made it into China. He met and befriended Kublai Khan and brought back many goods to Italy. This of course was a very hard journey in the 1200s. It took Marco Polo 20 years to complete this journey!

In the 1400s the Europeans wanted to figure out more efficient and easier ways to get to Asia. Prince Henry of Portugal wanted to find a sea route to Asia and Africa. He built a school, with his wealth, where master sailors, mapmakers, and shipbuilders would work together to improve maps and navigation devices. These men developed the famous Caravel sailing ship. These boats had mixed European and Arabic style ships to build a very efficient ship that would be great for long term journeys. This ship was more maneuverable than older ships.

The Portuguese were starting to colonize the western coast of Africa in the late 1400s. By 1488 Bartolomeu Dias sailed around the southern tip of Africa, named the Cape of Good Hope. He had found a sea route to Asia for explorers and traders to follow. Another Portuguese explorer named Vasco da Gama sailed around the Cape of Good Hope all the way to India. He returned to India in 1502 with naval warships. He captured many port cities for Portugal.

Spain was very jealous of Portugal’s success, and in 1492 they sent Christopher Columbus to explore the continent in between Europe and Asia. Christopher Columbus had to convince the rulers of Spain to finance his project, though. The rulers of Spain at the time were Ferdinand and Isabella. Ferdinand thought the expedition was pointless, but Isabella convinced him, with the help of Christopher Columbus that the expedition should be made. The royal couple agreed to finance Columbus’ journey. He set sail in August of 1492 and reached San Salvador three months later. He claimed the land he saw for Spain. He believed he was in India and called the people he saw “Indians”.

One man realized Columbus’ mistake that he had gone to a new continent, and not Asia. This man was named Amerigo Vespucci. He made six voyages to map the coast of these new continents. A German mapmaker made a new map based on Vespucci’s studies with all four continents, but it still was not totally correct. The Americas [the two new continents] were named after him.

One of the most important and most famous explorers was Ferdinand Magellan. He was from Portugal and he was a skilled sailor. He proposed that he could navigate around the world. No one had ever done this before and most people thought that he would fail. He sailed along the east coast of South America, and then went through the Straits of Magellan [named after Magellan]. They are a series of rivers cutting through the southern tip of South America. After that, he went through the south Pacific and got to the Philippine Islands. Magellan was killed by Philipino natives. Magellan’s crew sailed around Africa and all the way back to Spain. The jorney took three years! It was a major accomplishment, because Magellan was the first man to navigate the world!

The Age of Exploration enhanced the European’s view of the world. It also enhanced trade and access to the goods of the Americas. Without the Age of Exploration, the Americas would not have been able to evolve into the super economic, scientific, and industrial powerhouse they are today.

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